

We aspire to be an anti-racist multi-cultural program. To begin the journey of transformation, we start by acknowledging that:

Race is a concept invented by humans with real, ongoing, and harmful consequences.

Racism is a system and tool of privilege, inequality, inequity, and oppression.

Racism can function as a pattern of norms, micro-inequities and aggressions, and/or policies that inflict harm.

Individual identities are multi-faceted and never static. Diversity and differing viewpoints exist within cultures and groups.

Anti-racism work is psychologically hard. All who are engaged will need support and space for self-care.

It is not the role of people of color to educate their white colleagues, who must do their own anti-racism work.

Racism and white supremacist culture manifests politically, economically, and culturally at Emory and within HERCULES.

Issues of race, color, and class have a harmful impact on our center, its systems, and its people.

Anti-racism work will require change in HERCULES' culture and practices.

Addressing racism encompasses other forms of oppression and social injustices.

Communities of color and other oppressed groups have had negative experiences that have caused a valid distrust of research and science.

The HERCULES Exposome Research Center advances and applies the exposome concept - the totality of environmental exposures experienced across a lifespan and the response of biological systems to those exposures - and links it to the broader community and societal factors that drive the environments of individuals and define unique susceptibilities of communities to their environments.

Racism and injustices are critical factors that shape the exposome and exposome science. Therefore, we offer this Anti-Racism Commitment to guide HERCULES and its members to better understand and apply the exposome concept.

HERCULES Center Anti-Racism Commitment:

The HERCULES Center is against racism and all forms of oppression and injustice.

We commit to challenging the political, systemic, and cultural racism at our institution, within our Center, and in our communities. We commit to critically analyzing all current and future activities and programs to ensure we are addressing biases, norms, or policies that may cause harm to people of color.

We strive to demonstrate this commitment by building equity into all procedures, programs, and activities, such as purchasing/procurement practices, research and translational activities, publications and publishing practices, funding criteria, recruitment, training and educational opportunities, mentorship, and evaluation activities.

We expect HERCULES scientists to critically analyze all phases of their research activities and assumptions with humility and an anti-racist lens – specifically embracing the community's input and considering the potential impact of the science on a community.

We commit to incorporating diverse voices and perspectives across our Center and its activities, from our community partners to students, staff, faculty, and scientific collaborations.

To uphold this commitment, we believe and will be guided by the following principles:

- Seeking, respecting, listening to, and integrating diverse perspectives is crucial for clarity and a shared understanding.
- Lived experience is valid knowledge that contributes to science, understanding, and wisdom.
- We do not know what is best for individual communities and have much to learn from these partners. Humility will guide our interactions and scholarship.
- Discomfort is necessary for growth and learning.
- Addressing challenges related to racism and oppression requires trust, transparency, dialogue, reflection, and feedback.
- Collaboration, co-creation, and shared power are essential to our mission and take time and intentional action to implement successfully.
- Environmental exposures disproportionately impact structurally marginalized groups. Our science and actions can serve these communities.
- Career development that promotes equity and anti-racism fosters sustainable long-term improvements in environmental health.